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Summary record of the 310th meeting
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Chair: Ms. Degener

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35 (*continued*)

Initial report of Jordan (CRPD/C/JOR/1; CRPD/C/JOR/Q/1 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Jordan took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Prince** Mired Ra'ad Zeid **Al Hussain** (Jordan), introducing his country's initial report (CRPD/C/JOR/1), said that Jordan, motivated by its aspiration to be in the vanguard of ratifying States, had published the Convention in its Official Gazette in 2008, thereby incorporating it into domestic legislation. That action reflected the country's political will and its determination to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and to achieve the desired transformation from a model of disability based on care and charity to a rights-based approach. Jordan had taken a further pioneering step in the region when it introduced into the 2011 Constitution a new provision requiring the State to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

3. Although Jordan was facing a major crisis due to the inflow of refugees from conflicts in the region, it was taking vigorous action to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Their welfare was given high priority in the national agenda and among the country's decision makers. In 2012, the Government, under the able guidance of the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities, had undertaken a comprehensive review of the country's civil, criminal, commercial, economic and media-related legislation with a view to updating and aligning it with the principles enshrined in the Convention.

4. The Chamber of Deputies had subsequently adopted a new bill on the rights of persons with disabilities based on concepts, definitions and terminology that were in harmony with the world's most advanced legislation pertaining to the Convention. In the bill, disability was defined as a situation in which physical, behavioural and individual factors created barriers for persons with disabilities that prevented them from exercising their fundamental rights and freedoms on an equal basis with others. It was the first time that Middle Eastern legislation had contained a definition of disability that guaranteed protection against discrimination and the right to reasonable accommodation and accessibility.

5. Since submitting the initial report in 2012, the Government, in partnership with organizations of persons with disabilities and civil society organizations, had taken steps to develop institutional policies and practices that were in conformity, to the greatest extent possible, with its obligations under the Convention. Perhaps one of its greatest achievements, alongside those already mentioned, had been the inclusion of provisions in certain laws, regulations and directives that guaranteed access for persons with disabilities to a variety of basic services on an equal basis with others.

6. With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to exercise their legal capacity in the banking sector, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention, the Central Bank of Jordan, in cooperation with the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities, had, for the first time in the history of Jordan and the Middle East, issued instructions in October 2016 according persons with disabilities access to banking and credit services on a fully independent and private basis. They were merely required to provide their signature without any need for certification by another party. In addition, various types of reasonable accommodation were provided to allow persons with disabilities to use banking services without assistance. Under the instructions, banks must render their buildings and facilities accessible for persons with disabilities.

7. The new bill on the rights of persons with disabilities also promoted the legal capacity of persons with disabilities through an advanced definition of free and informed consent, which entitled them to take decisions independently and without the need for advice from any source. Jordan had been one of the first countries in the world to enact a law based on the model of graduated support for decision-making. In a further unprecedented step, the bill required the legislative and executive authorities to consult

persons with disabilities and their representative organizations whenever the Personal Status Act was amended, particularly the provisions concerning legal capacity.

8. Major progress had also been made in consolidating the system for protecting persons with disabilities against all forms of violence. The Government, in partnership with the persons concerned, had drafted a bill amending the Criminal Code. In particular, Jordan had set a precedent by recognizing disability as an aggravating circumstance for offences involving physical, psychological or sexual injury. The bill on the rights of persons with disabilities also included a flexible and comprehensive definition of violence, pursuant to which the violation of any right or freedom on grounds of disability was recognized as a form of violence that was liable to prosecution. The bill also provided for psychological, physical and social rehabilitation programmes for persons with disabilities who were victims of violence in order to facilitate their reintegration into society.

9. The Government was aware of the complexity of the sheltered accommodation system and its adverse impact on persons with disabilities. Notwithstanding the country's limited capacities and lack of financial and technical resources, it had been decided, at the highest level of decision-making, to dismantle shelters under a comprehensive national plan that provided for practical alternatives aimed at reintegrating those living there into their families and local communities. The authorities expected to begin implementing the plan in 2018 and to eliminate all sheltered accommodation by 2028.

10. Despite its achievements to date, Jordan still faced many challenges that could impede or slow down its progress in certain areas. One of the main challenges was the shortage of technical and financial resources and of the know-how required to expedite qualitative advances in vital areas such as inclusive education, which met with a stereotypical form of social resistance requiring vigorous efforts to raise awareness and to change attitudes and behaviour so that children with disabilities could have access to public education on an equal basis with other children. The requirements for achieving accessibility and reasonable accommodation in education, especially basic education, constituted a further challenge that called for cooperation and solidarity between Jordan and its international partners in laying the foundations for inclusive education.

11. The inadequate material environment in Jordan was yet another challenge, which should be tackled by promoting compliance with relevant legislation and establishing effective monitoring mechanisms. Achievement of an acceptable level of accessibility to public facilities and key services required more vigorous joint action at the national level as well as strong international support for capacity-building. Jordan was fully aware of the adverse impact of inadequate accessibility on the capacity of persons with disabilities to exercise their rights and freedoms on an equal basis with others. Top priority would therefore be given to that issue in the future.

12. **Mr. Tatić** (Country Rapporteur) said that the State party was to be commended for explicitly prohibiting disability-based discrimination in its Constitution and legislation.

13. He noted with satisfaction that the Jordanian Fatwa Directorate had issued a fatwa prohibiting forced sterilization on grounds of disability, especially of women and girls with disabilities and persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. It was to be hoped that that initiative would bring about cultural change in Jordanian society and elsewhere in the region.

14. He welcomed the adoption of the bill on the rights of persons with disabilities by the Chamber of Deputies and hoped that it would soon be enacted. He trusted that the definitions in the bill were in line with the Convention and that older legislation, which was based on a medical rather than a rights-based approach and even contained pejorative terms, would be amended.

15. It was important to have effective legal remedies in cases where the law on disability-based discrimination was breached. For example, women and girls with disabilities were faced with multiple intersectoral discrimination.

16. Children with disabilities should remain with their families and be fully included in society. The Committee noted with concern that, in some shelters, children were subjected to ill-treatment, including violence and psychological abuse. It was relieved to hear that

investigations were under way. It commended the plan to move from specialized segregated education for children with disabilities to inclusive quality education.

17. While the inclusion of accessibility standards in the National Building Code was welcome, it was regrettable that the Code was not fully implemented in practice. Information about measures to promote stricter monitoring and about the penalties imposed for non-compliance with accessibility standards, in both the public and private sectors, would be appreciated.

18. The State party's legislation still provided for a guardianship system. He hoped that it would soon be aligned with the provisions of the Convention. The Electoral Act too should be amended to guarantee all citizens the right to vote and be elected; persons under guardianship were currently denied that right.

19. He would like to hear about progress in ensuring electronic access to information for blind persons, in accordance with the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled. He also wished to know when Jordanian Sign Language would be officially recognized in the State party.

20. He welcomed the plans to provide support in local communities for persons with disabilities and to afford protection from ill-treatment, violence, torture and abuse. The State party's provision of shelter and safety to refugees was commendable. He wondered, however, whether all services were accessible for persons with disabilities.

21. Lastly, he noted with satisfaction that the State party had volunteered to have its implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals reviewed. How did it intend to make the Goals inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities?

Articles 1-10

22. **Mr. Ishikawa** asked what measures the State party took to ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities could perform their advisory and monitoring tasks under the Convention more effectively. He would appreciate information, for example, about training courses for civil servants, especially those working at key coordinating organizations, to enable them to provide effective assistance to public sector organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities and other stakeholders.

23. **Mr. You** Liang asked how the State party linked its implementation of the Convention with the Sustainable Development Goals. He requested more detailed information concerning the content of identity cards for persons with disabilities and the manner in which they would be issued and used. He asked whether there were any plans to include rights-based material on persons with disabilities in the curricula of mainstream education. He enquired about efforts to raise awareness of the Convention among deaf persons and the availability of a sign language version. Lastly, he asked whether deaf plaintiffs had full access to the courts and whether they could use their own sign language interpreters in judicial proceedings.

24. **Mr. Basharu** asked whether the State party intended to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention. He enquired whether women with disabilities could transmit their citizenship to their children, whether they were entitled to equal pay for work of equal value and whether the committee established to defend their rights was effective, particularly in preventing violence and abuse and promoting their full inclusion in the education system.. He also wished to know how the National Childhood Strategy ensured the full and effective participation of children with disabilities and their representative organizations in matters affecting them and how it protected them from all forms of ill-treatment.

25. According to the report, the living conditions of persons with disabilities posed a challenge to awareness-raising efforts. He wondered whether the media were involved in awareness-raising and whether they had been successful in promoting positive changes in attitudes. He would also like to know whether persons with disabilities and their representative organizations took part in awareness-raising campaigns.

26. **Mr. Alsaif** asked whether awareness-raising campaigns had been conducted in cooperation with religious authorities with a view to promoting a rights-based rather than a charity-based approach to persons with disabilities. With regard to accessibility, he asked whether courses on universal design formed a mandatory part of university curricula for engineers and designers. Lastly, he enquired about the sanctions imposed on entities and individuals that failed to comply with the National Building Code.

27. **Mr. Martin** asked whether persons with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, were included as trainers in awareness-raising programmes and whether the programmes were in line with the Convention.

28. **Mr. Babu** asked whether the State party intended to draw up a new national strategy for persons with disabilities, including an action plan for implementation of the Convention. He also wished to know whether there was any campaign to promote new provisions of the Criminal Code that would generate cultural change for women and girls and protect them from violence and abuse. He asked whether the State party planned to adopt policies on behalf of children that would include disability perspectives and mainstreaming, in line with the Convention.

29. **Mr. Langvad** said that he wished to know how persons with disabilities were represented through their organizations in the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities, and what financial and other forms of support were available for such organizations. He asked whether representative organizations of women and children with disabilities had been involved in drafting the new bill on the rights of persons with disabilities, and whether women with disabilities had contributed to the development of the National Strategy on Women in order to ensure that it included the disability perspective.

30. **Mr. Ruskus** said that he would like to hear more about the situation of children with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities who lived in rural areas. The Committee had been informed that some families concealed their children's disabilities and kept them at home on account of the social stigma associated with disability. He asked what support and inclusive community-based services were available to the families of children with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, and what action was being taken by the State party to prevent their ill-treatment and institutionalization and to ensure that all children with disabilities enjoyed human rights and freedoms on an equal basis with others.

31. **Mr. Kim** Hyung Shik asked how effective the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities had been in achieving its ambitious goals. He also wished to know to what extent persons with disabilities had been involved in drafting the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, 2007-2015, what resources the State party had allocated for its implementation and whether it had been successfully implemented.

32. **Mr. Parra Dussan**, noting that disability-based discrimination was prohibited, asked what procedures were in place for reporting such discrimination and whether any relevant statistics were available. He also wished to know whether the State party planned to enact legislation guaranteeing gender equality and, if so, whether it would include a reference to women with disabilities.

33. **Mr. Buntan** said that the State party's legislation was not yet in line with the Convention, notwithstanding the prohibition of disability-based discrimination in the Constitution. Were there any plans to amend provisions such as those that treated persons with disabilities as minors with limited capacity and article 467 of the Criminal Code, which referred to "insane" persons, who were equated with animals? He would also be interested to know whether the State party had used the public procurement budget to enhance accessibility throughout the country.

34. **Mr. Rukhlenko** said that he wished to underscore the importance of ensuring access to information for persons with sensory impairments and of training experts to provide such services. All persons with disabilities should be guaranteed access to education and to information and communication technology. He asked whether the State party intended to officially recognize sign language in the new bill on the rights of persons with disabilities, whether training courses would be provided for sign language interpreters and what the current availability of sign language interpretation services was.

35. **Mr. Chaker** asked whether the State party collected statistical data on the number of children with disabilities, disaggregated by type of disability. He also wished to know whether it was still common practice in Jordan, as it was in the majority of Muslim countries, for members of the same family, including first cousins, to marry and, if so, whether any efforts had been made to raise their awareness of the risk of their children being born with a disability and to discourage such marriages.

36. **Mr. Tatić** asked what measures the State party had taken to raise awareness and increase understanding of the concept of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors and whether persons with disabilities themselves had been involved in that endeavour. It would also be useful to know the outcome of the complaints lodged with the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities and the National Centre for Human Rights by persons with disabilities who had been unable to secure reasonable accommodation. Lastly, he asked whether airports, public transport vehicles, hotels and government buildings in Jordan were accessible to persons with a physical disability, particularly wheelchair users.

37. **Mr. Pranvokadee** said that he would appreciate more information on the laws repealed, the policies and practices abolished and the new legislative measures adopted or to be adopted for the purpose of ensuring compliance with articles 5, 6 and 10 of the Convention on equality and non-discrimination, women with disabilities and the right to life, respectively.

38. **Mr. Kabue** said that he would welcome an update on the progress made towards establishing the Equal Opportunities Committee as the body competent to receive complaints of disability-based discrimination, including complaints related to denial of or failure to provide reasonable accommodation, in accordance with the new bill on the rights of persons with disabilities. He would also like to hear about the impact of the "My Place Is among You" campaign to raise awareness of the need for inclusive education since its launch. Lastly, he wished to know when the State party intended to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty.

39. **The Chair** said that the Committee considered the continued application of the death penalty to be a cause for grave concern in view of the large number of persons with disabilities being held in Jordanian prisons. She asked whether the State party was taking steps towards the abolition of capital punishment.

The meeting was suspended at 4.05 p.m. and resumed at 4.30 p.m.

40. **Prince** Mired Ra'ad Zeid **Al Hussein** (Jordan) said it was hoped that the new bill on the rights of persons with disabilities, which was progressive in nature and enjoyed broad support, would be enacted in the near future. The bill addressed a number of the serious challenges facing persons with disabilities in Jordan in the fields of education and employment, as well as the broader issues of accessibility and the provision of reasonable accommodation.

41. **Mr. Alassaf** (Jordan) said that the delegation considered a number of the issues raised by Committee members to have no explicit link to the Convention and to fall within the scope of other international human rights instruments. He would nevertheless endeavour to address them. In a progressive move towards abolition, the list of crimes for which the death penalty could be imposed had been shortened. Furthermore, there were a number of restrictions on the imposition of capital punishment. Even when the death penalty was handed down by the courts, it could often be commuted to a custodial sentence. The decision to impose it was generally subject to judicial review, and a pardon could still be granted at that stage. While it was possible that the death penalty had been imposed on persons with disabilities in the past, he was not aware of any case in which it had actually been carried out. Jordan did not currently intend to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

42. In keeping with article 18 of the Convention, in Jordan there was no law that deprived persons with disabilities of their nationality on the basis of disability. While he recognized that the inability of Jordanian women to transmit their nationality to their

children could also affect women with disabilities, he considered that issue to fall primarily within the scope of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and not within that of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He hoped that the relevant law might be amended in the future.

61. The fact that Jordan had signed the Marrakesh Treaty was proof enough of its willingness to give effect to its provisions. It was his understanding that the Convention simply obliged States parties to guarantee persons with disabilities access to information on an equal footing with others; that did not imply an obligation for Jordan to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty. Moreover, Jordanian law effectively addressed the obligation set out in article 9 of the Convention and was arguably as broad in scope as the Marrakesh Treaty insofar as it required all scientific and legal texts to be made available in accessible formats such as Braille or simplified text.

64. The Government acknowledged that the existing definition of disability was based on the medical model of disability and needed to be modified. The new bill on the rights of persons with disabilities contained a revised definition, inspired by the Convention, and referred to the need to identify and remove barriers to accessibility and restrictions on the exercise by persons with disabilities of their rights, as well as to the obligation to make reasonable accommodation for them. The bill exceeded the requirements of article 5 of the Convention in terms of guaranteeing the principle of equality and non-discrimination in the enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their rights and even covered temporary disability.

65. The Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2007 stipulated that denial of reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities amounted to discrimination and violated their rights. The new bill, which prohibited all forms of direct and indirect discrimination against those persons, included an analogous provision and would assist the public authorities in implementing the Convention. The difficulties experienced in providing persons with disabilities with reasonable accommodation could be attributed to a weak legal culture, a dearth of technical capacity and a general lack of awareness of how to request reasonable accommodation. Denial of reasonable accommodation constituted a criminal offence, and the courts were required to enforce the applicable laws if a complaint to that effect was upheld. At the same time, mediation and arbitration were the Government's preferred methods of dispute resolution. The new Equal Opportunities Committee would be the first of its kind in the region and would mediate between the complainant and the defendant with the aim of resolving complaints and disputes over denial of or failure to provide reasonable accommodation, inter alia. Although it usually fell to courts to rule on what constituted reasonable accommodation, the slowness of the Jordanian justice system could hold up proceedings. The Equal Opportunities Committee would expedite such proceedings for the benefit of all groups that were vulnerable to discrimination, including persons with disabilities.

66. **Mr. Farawneh** (Jordan) said that the Government intended to introduce an inclusive framework for the protection of persons with disabilities that included a national plan to support the enforcement of all fundamental rights and, in particular, the rights of the most vulnerable segments of society. In addition, the Government, in cooperation with civil society, was in the process of setting up a special committee to investigate and resolve any complaints transmitted to it by the National Centre for Human Rights, including complaints related to existing laws, practices and policies, and to follow up on any recommendations made in that connection.

67. The Office of the Prime Minister had issued instructions to the different State institutions on the procedure for appointing public servants. In 2014, 111 women with disabilities had been appointed, compared to only 55 men. In 2015, the overall number of appointments had fallen on account of government spending cuts. In 2016, 102 women with disabilities had been appointed and 54 men. The positive trend witnessed in the employment of persons with disabilities was attributable, in part, to the effective application of special measures targeting that group. While the Government recognized that a number of shortcomings persisted in certain areas, it remained confident that the aforementioned national plan, which would remain subject to modification, would help to address them going forward.

48. **Mr. Alazzeh** (Jordan) said that the number of complaints alleging denial of reasonable accommodation received by the National Centre for Human Rights over the previous two years had not exceeded 15 on account of the high level of awareness among State and private sector institutions of the need to provide it, on the one hand, and the reluctance of persons with disabilities to lodge complaints, on the other. There was a clear need for the Government to step up its efforts to educate persons with disabilities about their right to request reasonable accommodation. The Ministry of Education had developed a budget model to ensure that adequate funding was earmarked for providing reasonable accommodation in the education system and for making the adjustments necessary to guarantee the accessibility of the built environment to persons with disabilities.

49. **Mr. Maaitah** (Jordan) said that, in Jordan, children with disabilities were educated free of charge and that all schools were equipped to welcome them. The Ministry of Education had issued regulations obliging schools to provide children with disabilities with the tools necessary to allow them to follow mainstream classes. Accordingly, children with disabilities were provided with assistive devices, such as hearing aids and wheelchairs, as well as accessible learning materials in the case of children with visual impairments. Children with disabilities attending mainstream schools were also provided with government-funded transport. Some 30 mainstream schools currently taught children with disabilities, who were assigned a classroom assistant to accompany them, support their learning and ensure their equal participation in lessons.

50. **Mr. Alazzeh** (Jordan) said that much work remained to be done in respect of education for children with disabilities, which was considered a priority. In particular, there was a need to promote understanding of integration and inclusion as two separate concepts, each with its own policy. The Ministry of Education wished to provide comprehensive education for children with disabilities, and efforts were being made to ensure that weaknesses in that area did not have repercussions for future generations.

51. Making sign language an official language in the country would be a complex legal exercise entailing the amendment of the Constitution. At the outset, it would be necessary to define what was meant by an official language. If it was made clear, however, that the intention was to recognize sign language as a useful means of facilitating communication with persons with disabilities, for example, then it might be possible to open a discussion on the subject. Several stakeholders taught sign language and endeavoured to promote its use, particularly in the service industry and tourism sector.

52. **Ms. Alhares** (Jordan) said that the Government was cognizant of the challenges it faced when it came to sign language interpretation and was taking a range of measures to tackle them. A specialized training programme was not yet in place, but it was recognized that, in order to obtain a diploma, prospective interpreters should undergo approximately 150 hours of training and that they should then work a certain number of hours to gain the necessary experience before being accredited by the relevant entities. The input of sign language interpreters had been sought in designing plans in that regard.

53. An initiative had been launched to enhance the safety of persons with hearing impairments, which included the organization of a workshop for police officers to raise awareness of the difficulties faced by those persons. A 24-hour hotline had been set up to help persons with hearing impairments with daily activities, such as getting directions, and some pharmacies employed sign language interpreters. Mobile telephone companies offered a range of services for persons with hearing impairments. The possibility of opening another hotline to enable them to contact public services was being considered.

54. **Mr. Alazzeh** (Jordan) said the Government was fully aware that women with disabilities faced double and perhaps even triple discrimination if they were in a vulnerable situation, which was why legislation was in place to protect their rights. Nonetheless, the need to strengthen such legislation, and ensure implementation, was recognized. For that reason, disability of the victim had been added as an aggravating factor for the offences of physical and sexual violence and sexual harassment in the amendments proposed to the Criminal Code in 2016. Measures had been taken to improve the participation of women with disabilities in health programmes and that category of women had also been taken into account in gender equality programmes.

55. **Ms. Haj-Yasin** (Jordan) said that there had been a number of successes in promoting the rights of women with disabilities, who had been involved in developing the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, 2007-2015. For example, the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities and the National Commission for Women had engaged in the three-year campaign calling for the criminalization of forced sterilization, addressing the issue from several perspectives, including medical and religious. Both Muslim and Christian groups had spoken out against the practice, which was the subject of a fatwa.

56. **Mr. Zabet** (Jordan) said that the country's development objectives were fully in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, which had been broadly endorsed by the King and all national stakeholders. The Jordan Document 2025, which laid out the State party's priorities for the period 2016-2025, clearly stipulated that the Sustainable Development Goals must be incorporated into the country's national development plan. The Government was taking steps to achieve the Goals and had adopted guidelines on the oversight of those efforts by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. In addition, it had established a technical committee to draft plans, with detailed targets, and present them to the highest authorities for approval. Several projects had been submitted for 2016, 2017 and 2018. A recent report had highlighted the importance of taking into account the needs of persons with disabilities in development activities.

57. **Mr. Alazzeh** (Jordan) said that a draft amendment to article 467 of the Criminal Code, removing the offending language, had been submitted to the parliament for approval. It was hoped that the amendment would be adopted by 2018.

58. The Government had taken strong measures to put an end to violence against persons with disabilities in residential institutions, including making structural changes to the institutions in order to reduce the possibility of a recurrence. The legal capacity of persons with disabilities was recognized by law, although that was not yet the case for persons with psychosocial disabilities. A great deal of work remained to be done in that area, notably to find an alternative to guardianship. The definition of guardianship must be flexible and placement under guardianship should require the consent of the person concerned.

59. Migratory flows were obviously a serious issue for Jordan, resulting in a huge population increase in a very short period of time. Refugees in Jordan were in areas designated as emergency zones, which was why there were no clear data on the number of refugees with disabilities. A national emergency response plan had been launched to deal with Syrian refugees, and the Government provided special services to refugees with disabilities.

Articles 11-20

60. **Mr. Ruskus** said the Committee was concerned that, under the State party's Public Health Act, a competent physician could order the admission of any person to hospital and the Minister of Health had the right to detain any person and send him or her to hospital on the basis of a medical report. Civil society reports revealed cases of individuals being held in mental health centres for more than 20 years, without any family visits. Noting that such legislation and practice was contrary to article 14 of the Convention, he asked whether there were any plans to repeal provisions that authorized deprivation of liberty for any reason related to an actual or perceived psychosocial disability as well as the administration of treatment, services or any other intervention without the free and informed consent of the person concerned.

61. **Mr. Langvad** said that he would like to receive information on any plans to release persons deprived of their liberty on the basis of a psychosocial disability, including on the time frame and budget for the provision of inclusive, non-compulsory services for such persons in the local community. He also wished to know whether the State party had any specific strategy for the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities.

62. **Mr. Kabue**, noting that the Civil Defence Department had delivered training to its personnel on sign language and etiquette for dealing with persons with disabilities in cases of emergency, asked whether such measures were provided for by law, and whether that

Department was the only one dealing with situations of risk or whether a more comprehensive approach was adopted. He enquired whether there were any plans to remove from existing legislation derogatory language such as the term "of unsound mind", which hindered the recognition of the legal capacity of persons with disabilities. What arrangements were in place to ensure the provision of legal assistance and representation to persons with disabilities whose rights had been violated?

63. **Mr. Martin**, stressing the importance of self-advocacy for persons with intellectual disabilities, said that he wished to know whether and how persons with intellectual disabilities were represented on the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities. He would welcome further information on the steps being taken to raise awareness of and implement the provisions of article 12 of the Convention, taking into account the Committee's general comment No. 1 (2014). Lastly, statistics on the number of institutions for persons with disabilities and the number of persons living in them would be appreciated, as would details about the measures being adopted to implement article 19 so that all persons with disabilities could live in the community with the appropriate services and choose where, how and with whom they lived.

64. **Mr. Kim** Hyung Shik said that he would like to know more about the participation of persons with psychosocial disabilities in public and political life, and to what extent they were allowed to exercise their right to vote without support from a guardian. The delegation should comment on reports that persons with disabilities were subjected to exploitation, violence and abuse. While official data were lacking in that area, their vulnerability certainly exposed them to the risk of such treatment. He would also appreciate the delegation's views on claims that persons with disabilities were not being heard by the authorities and that that situation was attributable not only to insensitivity on the part of officials but also to corruption. While the State party was to be commended on its huge intake of refugees, he wondered how refugees with disabilities were identified and how support services were provided to them.

65. **Mr. You** Liang asked whether there were any plans to set up a system to enable persons with disabilities to obtain affordable, high-quality mobility aids and technical devices, for example through medical insurance, rather than them being provided on an ad hoc basis. He also wished to know how the State party encouraged or incentivized innovation in the field of assistive technology.

66. **Mr. Chaker** asked whether any steps were being taken to abolish the custom of firing shots during wedding celebrations, which in some cases resulted in injuries and disabilities.

67. **Mr. Basharu** said that he would welcome clarification of the statement in paragraph 120 of the State party report to the effect that the effectiveness of laws, policies and programmes designed to eliminate violence against women and children was limited because they conflicted with traditional societal attitudes that considered the management of family affairs and members to be a private matter. Were such laws, policies and programmes actually implemented and were perpetrators punished, or did traditional attitudes prevail?

68. **Mr. Buntan** asked whether the State party had developed a comprehensive plan to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and, if so, whether it was inclusive of persons with disabilities. Had Jordan signed the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action? He asked whether persons with disabilities were allowed and encouraged to pursue careers in the justice system. Lastly, he wished to know whether the State party intended to repeal article 14 of the Public Health Act so as to prohibit the involuntary institutionalization of persons with psychosocial disabilities.

69. **Mr. Pyaneandee** said that the delegation should comment on reports that persons with disabilities were subjected to torture and inhuman and cruel treatment, and specifically that women and girls in institutions were subjected to sexual violence and exploitation. If that was the case, how did the Government propose to strengthen the law and guarantee access to the justice system and effective remedies for persons with disabilities?

70. **Mr. Ishikawa** said that he would like to know what proportion of hospitalizations of persons with psychosocial disabilities was forced. What was the average length of hospitalization of those persons, voluntary or otherwise?

71. **The Chair** said that she would like to hear what measures were being taken to combat violence against women with disabilities and help victims. The delegation might wish to comment on a case, reported to the Committee, of a deaf woman who had been raped and, when the case came to trial, had been denied the services of a female sign language interpreter but instead had been assigned a male interpreter who was acquainted with the accused. She would be interested to know how the Government viewed the fact that cases of violence against women, particularly rape, were dropped if the perpetrator married the victim. Noting that a great deal of attention was paid in the State party to preventing impairment, she stressed that such measures did not actually serve to implement the Convention, which was concerned with the human rights of persons living with disabilities.

72. **Mr. Tatić** said that he would be interested to hear more concrete examples of good practice in relation to cases of ill-treatment of persons with disabilities. He would welcome clarification as to whether the 1950s law on nationality could be interpreted in such a way as to prevent persons with psychosocial disabilities from acquiring Jordanian nationality. He also wished to know how the State party ensured that, in allocating the funding it received to support its valiant efforts to deal with the refugee crisis, due account was taken of the needs of refugees with disabilities.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.